

Tanning Industry.—Military and civilian requirements are causing the pits to be used to the fullest possible extent. As a rule the biggest single item of output is sole leather, the demand for this leather by manufacturers engaged on Army footwear contracts increasing month by month. Further extensions to premises have been made in several tanneries during the last twelve months. Supplies of tanning-materials have been satisfactory, and with an assured supply of hides present progress should be maintained.

Footwear.—Footwear-factories have been busy throughout the year on military and civilian work. The percentage of production devoted to military footwear has steadily increased over the period, particularly since the arrival of orders for boots for export, and some units are engaged exclusively in the manufacture of military footwear. Production programmes for military work are well in hand, some of the larger units being ahead of schedule.

Biscuits and Confectionery.—Reports indicate that sales of confectionery have been very satisfactory. Biscuit manufacturers have been extremely busy on contracts for service biscuits and the working of shifts has required to be resorted to in many cases. The output of civilian lines has necessarily been greatly curtailed.

Foundries and Engineering Workshops.—Engineering firms generally have been busy throughout the year, shifts or overtime being regularly worked in many instances. The manufacture of munitions, &c., absorbs a large portion of the local foundry and workshop capacity. A considerable and expanding amount of constructional work is done to-day, as well as replacement and repair-work.

Most firms engaged in the light engineering trade have been employed to a considerable extent on contract work for the Army and Air Force and in manufacturing such lines as stirrup pumps and fire-fighting equipment for E.P.S. organizations. Civil orders have been held up to a certain extent, and in so far as this class of work is concerned preference has been given as far as possible to essential industrial machinery.

Ranges and Cookers.—The decline in civilian building activity, due largely to concentration on defence construction, coupled with difficulty which has been experienced during the year in obtaining supplies of certain raw materials, has led to a substantial decline in the total sales of electric ranges, coal-ranges, and gas-cookers. In an attempt to utilize some of their surplus capacity several firms have commenced the manufacture of new lines.

Tinware.—Tinsmiths report that activity has been at a high level during the greater part of the year under review, principally due to the big demand for tins for packing service biscuits and oatmeal and for dairy utensils. Supplies of tinplate for essential purposes have been adequate, but many non-essential lines have been dispensed with in order to conserve stocks.

Brush and Broom Making.—Shortages of bristles and wire have caused manufacturers some anxiety during the year, but despite this, production in most lines has been maintained to a surprising extent. Semi-defence work and contracts of national importance have bulked large in total output of the industry.

Furniture and Cabinet Making.—Reports from manufacturers reveal that whilst some have experienced satisfactory trading conditions, others have found business to be very quiet. Shortages exist in upholstery coverings, hardware, and mattress wire. Japanese oak is off the market, and this, combined with the restriction of supplies of timber from Australia, has led to considerable expansion in the demand for local timbers, particularly Southland beech.

NEW INDUSTRIES.

Expansion of local industry has continued, manufacture of the following commodities being commenced or developed to a greater extent during the past twelve months: Metal and novelty buttons, typewriter-ribbons, inks and stains for finishing footwear, potato-sorting machines, enamel cast-iron stewpans and casseroles, gas-producers, can-sealing compounds, plywood, wooden handles, egg-grading machines.

BUREAU OF INDUSTRY.

INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY ACT, 1936.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH APRIL, 1942.

During the year there were a few changes in the personnel of the Bureau, Mr. E. L. Greensmith, Second Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, resigned on account of pressure of work, and his place was taken by Mr. C. R. J. Atkin, Chief Investigating Officer of the Treasury. Mr. G. L. O'Halloran, Secretary of the Bureau, and Mr. J. E. Thomas, Food Controller, of the Internal Marketing Division, were appointed additional members to the Bureau. Mr. I. Matheson, who was one of the Manufacturers' Representatives, resigned, and Mr. E. W. Ackland, Managing Director of the National Electrical and Engineering Co., Ltd., was appointed in his place. Unfortunately, Mr. Ackland did not enjoy very good health and attended only a few meetings. His death took place towards the end of March.

The progressive intensification of the war effort, which received added impetus from the entry of Japan into the war, has affected the whole economic and industrial structure of the Dominion both in regard to the manufacturing of commodities in New Zealand and to importation from overseas. Under these circumstances it has been extremely difficult to further the purposes of the Act. The restrictions on exports from overseas countries and shipping difficulties have had a restraining effect on the importation of machinery and raw materials so essential to the industrial growth of the Dominion. In consequence of this the activity of the Bureau has not been associated with new industries quite to the same extent that it has in the past.